[26th November 1928

Alleged protest against vaccination as a safe method of preventing smallpox.

* 640 Q.—Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that there is a strong feeling against vaccination in England and India as a safe method of preventing smallpox;

(b) whether it is a fact that one Mr. K. V. Subramania Ayyar of Palghat is being prosecuted by the Municipal Council of Palghat for not getting his child vaccinated;

(c) whether the said Subramania Ayyar has presented a memorial to the said Municipal Council and to the Government that he has a conscientious objection to his child being vaccinated on religious, moral and sanitary grounds and if so, what has become of the memorial;

(d) whether the Government will get the necessary information from the Municipal Council, if they do not possess sufficient information;

(e) whether the Government have any proposal before them to exempt, under satisfactory safeguards, people having conscientious objections from prosecutions for not getting their children vaccinated; and

(f) if there is no such proposal at present whether the Government have any objection to go into the question?

A.—(a) The Government are aware that there is a section in England that hold strong views against vaccination, but they are not aware of any such section in India.

(b) The Government understand that a prosecution was launched but withdrawn.

(c) Yes. The Government cannot interfere in the matter.

(d) The Chairman, Municipal Council, Palghat, has reported that the petitions submitted to him and to the Council were rejected.

(e) No.

(f) The matter was considered as late as 1924 and nothing has happened since to justify reconsideration.

Opening of Child Welfare and Maternity centres in the local board areas.

* 641 Q.—The Zamindar of Gollapalli: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state what steps the Government have taken in the matter of opening child welfare and maternity centres in the local boards areas?

A.—Local boards are primarily responsible for the public health of the areas within their respective jurisdictions and it is, therefore, their duty to open child welfare and maternity centres. In 1923 the Government communicated to all local boards a detailed memorandum prepared by the Director of Public Health on Child Welfare and Maternity Relief and requested them to formulate and carry into effect practical measures on the lines suggested by the Director of Public Health. The number of maternity and child welfare centres in 1927 is reported to have been 55. The Director of Public Health has recently reported that a special staff is necessary to organize maternity and child welfare work throughout the Presidency, and his proposals in this regard are under the consideration of the Government.